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Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001

Proposed abolition of two General Service posts under income section 3, Services to the public

Note by the Secretary-General

1. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 52/220 of 22 December 1997, and in view of the relatively high personnel costs incurred under the present arrangements for operating the bookshop at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, the Secretariat has explored the possibility of engaging an outside contractor to assist in running the bookshop.

2. During the review it was determined that the new arrangements could be expected to lead to an increase in gross sales at the Geneva bookshop in the next biennium of some 11 per cent over those of the current biennium. The new arrangements would also result in net revenues of some 2 per cent of gross sales, unlike in the current biennium, in which an excess of expenditure over gross income has been projected. The related proposal for engaging an outside contractor to run the bookshop in Geneva was made in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 under income section 3, Services to the public. The proposed reorganization of the bookshop operations would result in the abolition of two General Service (Other level) posts at Geneva that are currently allocated for the bookshop sales staff.[1]

3. Following the request of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to the Secretary-General, made in its first report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001,[2] the Secretariat reviewed the operational effects of the proposed abolition of the posts on bookshop activities, including monitoring of the activities of contractual personnel, maintenance of liaison with the Sales and Marketing Section and the promotion of sales activities. Analysis of responsibilities assigned to existing staff of the Sales and Marketing Section has indicated that some functions, such as sales promotional activities, the selection of United Nations publications as well as commercial publications for sale in the bookshop and maintaining related databases, were executed by the existing staff of the Sales and Marketing Section at present and would need to continue as staff functions under the new arrangements. At the same time, the new arrangements would also

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require establishing a constant monitoring function over the operations of the bookshop and of the contractor personnel. The contractor personnel would undertake routine sales duties in the bookshop. Under the circumstances, it would thus appear appropriate to retain one General Service (Other level) post within the Sales and Marketing Section. The related costs would amount to $157,600 for the biennium 2000-2001.

4. In summary, proposals for the abolition of two General Service-level posts in the Geneva Sales and Marketing Section are modified to abolition of just one post so that one may be maintained. The result of retaining one post formerly recommended for abolition would be a reduction in net revenue for the Geneva Sales and Marketing Section, from $868,900 to $711,300.

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 6* (A/54/6/Rev.1), vol. III, para. 153.30.

[2] Ibid., *Supplement No. 7* (A/54/7), chap. II, para. 153.4.